

THE WHITE HOUSE

OUTGOING MESSAGE



WHSA

OPERATION IMMEDIATE
PRECEDENCE

CLASSIFICATION

19 MAY 62 50X1
DATE

FROM:

TO: **GEN MCHUGH EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT**

INFO:

CITE: _____

~~THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST~~

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST--19 MAY 62

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THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST--19 MAY 1962

1. LAOS:

A. PHOUMI TOLD AMBASSADOR BROWN YESTERDAY THAT HE WAS WILLING TO ATTEND A THREE PRINCES MEETING AT KHANG KHAY IN THE PLAINE DES JARRES, PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE THE TRANSFER OF THE DEFENSE AND INTERIOR MINISTRIES, AND PROMISED TO COOPERATE FULLY WITH MAAG ON MILITARY MATTERS. IN A SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH GENERAL TUCKER, HOWEVER, PHOUMI WAS ANYTHING BUT COOPERATIVE ABOUT CONDUCTING RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS OUT OF BAN HOUEI SAI BACK TOWARD NAM THA. HE TOLD TUCKER THAT POLITICAL MATTERS WERE UPPERMOST IN HIS MIND NOW, AND HE WOULD ATTEND TO THE MILITARY SITUATION LATER. ON THE BASIS OF OUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES WITH PHOUMI, WE FEEL THAT SOME SKEPTICISM ABOUT HIS ASSURANCES IS DESERVED. BOTH THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND BROWN, HOWEVER, FEEL THAT PHOUMI IS NOW POINTED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

B. PHOUI SANANIKONE TELLS US THAT HE STANDS READY TO TAKE THE LEADING ROLE IN NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT WITH SOUVANNA, BUT DOES NOT SEE HOW HE CAN TAKE OVER WITHOUT PHOUMI'S CONSENT.

C. THE MILITARY SITUATION REMAINS QUIESCENT. ROYAL ARMY PATROLS, LED BY AMERICAN PERSONNEL, HAVE PROBED 30 MILES NORTHEAST OF BAN HOUEI SAI WITHOUT SEEING ANY SIGNS OF THE ENEMY.

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D. FOLLOWING THE DEPARTURE OF THE LAO "GOOD-WILL" TRAVELLING TROUPE FROM TAIPEI, THE CHINESE NATIONALISTS HAVE ASSURED US THAT THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATIONS THEY RESTRAINED THEMSELVES LARGELY TO EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY AND VAGUE ASSURANCES ABOUT PROVIDING "SOME RELIEF GOODS." IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE LAO ROAD SHOW PLANS TO PLAY IN MANILA ON 21 MAY.

E. IN BANGKOK, THAI OFFICIALS ARE BECOMING SOMEWHAT LESS NEGATIVE TOWARD RECEIVING MILITARY FORCES FROM COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THE US. MEANWHILE, [REDACTED] PAKISTAN WILL PROBABLY RESPOND FAVORABLY, ALBEIT WITHOUT MUCH RELISH, TO A THAI REQUEST FOR TROOPS IF IT IS CAST WITHIN THE SEATO FRAMEWORK. THE FRENCH REMAIN AS RETICENT AS EVER.

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F. BLOC PROPAGANDA IN LAOS IS STILL BEING PLAYED IN A RELATIVELY LOW KEY, STRUMMING MAINLY ON THE THEME THAT BY MOVING MILITARY FORCES INTO THAILAND THE US HAS GOT ITSELF CAUGHT IN A NET FROM WHICH IT WILL NOT BE EASY TO GET DISENTANGLED.

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2. SOUTH VIETNAM:

WE STILL CANNOT DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT YESTERDAY'S GRENADE-THROWING INCIDENT IN DOWNTOWN SAIGON HERALDS A CONCERTED TERROR CAMPAIGN SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED AGAINST AMERICANS. OUR EMBASSY, NEVERTHELESS, HAS AGAIN CAUTIONED AMERICANS TO BE PARTICULARLY CAREFUL ON COMMUNIST ANNIVERSARIES; TODAY, HO CHI MINH'S BIRTHDAY, BEING A NOTABLE EXAMPLE. [REDACTED]

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3. INDONESIA - WEST NEW GUINEA:

A. [REDACTED] THE INDO- NESIANS ARE DETERMINED TO GIVE THE DUTCH A BLOODY NOSE IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. THEY NOTE, IN THIS CONNECTION, THAT THREE SUBMARINES (CARRYING LIVE TORPEDOES), WHICH DEPARTED SURABAYA TEN DAYS AGO, COULD NOW BE IN POSITION TO INTERCEPT DUTCH TROOP TRANSPORTS APPROACHING WEST NEW GUINEA. THEY ALSO SUGGEST THAT COMBINED MANEUVERS SCHEDULED IN THE BORNEO AREA NEXT MONTH MIGHT BE A BLIND FOR MORE GENUINELY WARLIKE OPERATIONS. [REDACTED]

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B. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR MAY HAVE HAD SIMILAR THOUGHTS IN THE BACK OF HIS MIND WHEN HE TOLD JONES YESTERDAY THAT HE CONSIDERED THE CURRENT SITUATION TO BE "VERY DANGEROUS," AND POINTED OUT THAT SUKARNO MUST "DO SOMETHING" TO REDEEM HIS PLEDGE TO GAIN CONTROL OVER WEST NEW GUINEA THIS YEAR. HE WAS CAREFUL TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT HIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT WANT TO SEE A FULL-FLEDGED WAR BREAK OUT.

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4. MEXICAN COMMUNISTS PLANNING ANTI-KENNEDY DEMONSTRATIONS:

SEVERAL COMMUNIST GROUPS ARE TALKING ABOUT CREATING AN "UNHEALTHY ATMOSPHERE" DURING THE PRESIDENT'S FORTHCOMING VISIT BY SPONSORING ANTI-US RALLIES AND MAKING A GENERAL NUISANCE OF THEMSELVES. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THESE SHENANIGANS, AND WE BELIEVE IT HAS BOTH THE WILL AND THE MEANS TO KEEP MATTERS UNDER CONTROL.

5. NOTES:

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B. LISBON IS DEVELOPING A BAD CASE OF NERVES AS A RESULT OF INSISTENT RUMORS THAT BIG CHANGES IN THE GOVERNMENT ARE IN THE OFFING.

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C. THE SITUATION IN ECUADOR REMAINS VOLATILE, AND MORE CABINET OFFICERS ARE SAID TO BE PLANNING TO SUBMIT THEIR RESIGNATIONS IF AROSEMENA WILL NOT AGREE TO REMOVE LEFTISTS FROM GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. AROSEMENA'S REACTION IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT

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BUT WE THINK THE ODDS FAVOR HIS ATTEMPTING TO POSTPONE A SHOWDOWN UNTIL AFTER THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS TWO WEEKS FROM TOMORROW.

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D. MOSCOW EARLIER THIS WEEK AGREED TO INCREASE ITS ECONOMIC AID TO CUBA BY ROUGHLY \$50 MILLION, MOST OF IT APPARENTLY TO GO ON THE CUFF. AMONG THE COMMODITIES TO BE PROVIDED ARE 5,000 TRUCKS, 850 TRACTORS, AN OIL TANKER, AND A WIDE VARIETY OF FOODSTUFFS. 50X1

E. THE FRENCH, ENCOURAGED BY BRITISH SALES OF VISCOUNT AIRCRAFT TO COMMUNIST CHINA, ARE TRYING TO INTEREST PEIPING IN CARAVELLES. WE HEAR THAT THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN GETTING A NIBBLE, IF NOT A STRIKE. 50X1

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